Selections from CCCC's "Principles and Practices in Electronic Portfolios"
http://www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/electronicportfolios

Introductory Premises
Composition professionals in post-secondary institutions—composition faculty, writing program administrators, and technology staff—share concern and responsibility for helping students learn to write at a college level, using the most effective communication technologies. Disciplinary practice and research suggest that portfolio assessment has become an important part of the learning-to-write process.

In turn, electronic portfolios (e-portfolios) have become a viable institutional tool to facilitate student learning and its assessment. E-portfolios can be "web-sensible"—a thoughtfully arranged collection of multimedia-rich, interlinked, hypertextual documents that students compose, own, maintain, and archive on the Internet or in other formats (e.g., CD-ROMs, DVDs). Web applications designed to support e-portfolio composition can offer additional opportunities for providing structure, guidance, and feedback to students, and can provide students with opportunities to connect selectively with multiple audiences.

E-portfolios communicate various kinds of information for the purposes of assessment. For example, e-portfolios can:

- Identify connections among academic and extra-curricular learning for admission to higher education and vocational opportunities
- Demonstrate applications of knowledge and critical literacies for course or programmatic assessment
- Provide evidence of meeting standards for professional certification
- Display qualifications for employment
- Showcase job-related accomplishments beyond schooling, for evaluation or promotion
- Represent lifelong learning for participation in public service

However, these purposes do not capture important kinds of student learning in composition courses that should carry over to writing tasks in other courses and contexts, e.g., students understanding their own writing process or learning style, or students setting their own goals for future learning.

Principle #1: Learning Outcomes
Students are guided by clearly articulated individual, course, programmatic, or institutional outcomes in their collection, selection, reflection upon, and presentation of "artifacts" (various electronic documents) in the e-portfolio. At the same time, students structure portfolios around their own learning goals.
Supportive best practices:

- Composition Faculty:
    - Familiarize students with programmatic learning outcomes
    - Share the rubric that will be used in e-portfolio assessment
    - Provide students with models of e-portfolios that illustrate different ways of meeting programmatic outcomes and satisfying rubric criteria
    - Help students identify personal learning goals and adapt programmatic outcomes to those goals
    - Design e-portfolios that demonstrate their own learning goals in teaching

Principle #2: Digital Environments
Students make optimal use of the technological features of electronic writing, collaboration, and records-keeping, and consider the larger implications of making e-portfolios accessible on the Internet.
Supportive best practices:

- Composition Faculty:

    - Introduce students to concepts and applications of visual rhetoric on the Internet
    - Teach students to use features of web-design in rhetorically effective and ethical ways (linking, choosing images, creating webpage formats)
    - Discuss protocols for obtaining permission and documenting Internet sources
    - Help students experiment with multimedia possibilities for composing documents
    - Encourage students to collaborate in web-designing sessions
    - Facilitate critical discussions on the benefits and disadvantages of students allowing public access to their documents

Principle #4: Authentic Audiences
Students engage in audience analysis of who they intend to read their e-portfolios, not only to accommodate faculty, but also employers, issuers of credentials, family, friends, and other readers. Students coordinate access to their e-portfolios with faculty, programs, the institution, and other readers.
Supportive best practices:

- Composition Faculty:

    - Facilitate critical discussions of different readers' expectations about grammatical usage and digital styles
    - Teach conventions of user-friendly webpage design and functionality
    - Identify the readers who will assess students' programmatic e-portfolios, and familiarize students with those readers' expectations
    - Help students identify and cultivate appropriate outside readers to respond to their e-portfolios (e.g., former teachers or employers)
    - Ask students to discuss changes they would make to "re-purpose" e-portfolios for different readers, e.g., program directors in their major, prospective employers, evaluators of transferable course credits
    - Encourage students to understand that e-portfolios are dynamic, not static, websites that they will continue to change as they encounter new readers in various contexts

Principle #5: Reflection and E-portfolio Pedagogy
Students create "reflective artifacts" in which they identify and evaluate the different kinds of learning that their e-portfolios represent. In particular, students may explain how various forms of instructive feedback (from faculty, Writing Centers, peers, and other readers) have influenced the composition and revision of their various e-portfolio artifacts, making teaching methods and learning contexts more transparent to their readers.
Supportive best practices:

- Composition Faculty:

    - Teach students different formats and forms that facilitate reflection on their learning at various stages of drafting and web-design (e.g., reflective cover letters that introduce and link readers to various artifacts; concept maps)

- Teach students that ongoing, rigorous reflection is a crucial part of the process of creating e-portfolios that are dynamic, not static websites
- Provide opportunities for students to give each other feedback on e-portfolio artifacts, including reflective artifacts
- Give students clear, constructive feedback that encourages revision and offers technological tips for improvement
- Encourage students to consult with Writing Center tutors or other institutional support services
- Collaborate regularly with other faculty, technology staff, and program directors to share the most effective ways to provide feedback and teach reflection

NWP's Multimodal Assessment Project (http://digitalis.nwp.org/resource/2118)

- *Context*: we can grow in our awareness of and attention to the context/situation in which we are working and for which we are composing. This includes the rhetorical context of audience, purpose, and occasion; circulation context of the distribution environment; expectations for form and genre; etc.; the assignment if there is one or expectations of a discourse community
- *Artifact:* we can grow in our capacities to design and produce the pieces themselves, including developing our capacities to manage the technical elements and affordances in the medium of composition, and to use them for effect in ever more powerful ways
- *Process Management*: we can grow in our abilities to plan, implement, and assess our work; to find and manage resources and digital assets that we use in composing; to reflect on our performance and to collaborate effectively (particularly given the fact that so many multimodal projects are produced by teams)
- *Substance/Content*: we can grow in the quality and sophistication of what we are communicating in our work; we can improve the quality and power of the ideas or content, the credibility of the information, the depth of the story or argument
- *Habits of Mind*: we can develop, in an ongoing way over time, dispositions and capacities that will serve us well in life as a productive and creative individual.

From CCCC's "Position Statement on Teaching, Learning, and Assessing Writing in Digital Environments" (http://www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/digitalenvironments)

Increasingly, classes and programs in writing require that students compose digitally. Such writing occurs both in conventional "face-to-face" classrooms and in classes and programs that are delivered at a distance. The expression composing digitally" can refer to a myriad of practices. In its simplest form, such writing can refer to a "mixed media" writing practice, the kind that occurs when students compose at a computer screen, using a word processor, so that they can submit the writing in print (Moran). Such writing may not utilize the formatting conventions such as italics and bold facing available on a word processor; alternatively, such writing often includes sophisticated formatting as well as hypertextual links. Digital composing can take many other forms as well. For example, such composing can mean participating in an online discussion through a listserv or bulletin board (Huot and Takayoshi). It can refer to creating compositions in presentation software. It can refer to participating in chat rooms or creating webpages. It can mean creating a digital portfolio with audio and video files as well as scanned print writings. Most recently, it can mean composing on a class weblog or wiki. And more generally, as composers use digital technology to create new genres, we can expect the variety of digital compositions to continue proliferating. The focus of writing instruction is expanding: the curriculum of composition is widening to include not one but two literacies: a literacy of print and a literacy of the screen. In addition, work in one medium is used to enhance learning in the other.